

REMARKS

This paper is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed December 5, 2003. Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 23 have been amended. Claims 25-33, including independent claims 25, 28 and 31, have been added. A Credit Card Payment Form (Form PTO-2038) for payment of the fee for the added claims (\$420) is being filed with this Amendment. Please charge any other fees, if necessary, for entry of this Amendment to our Deposit Account No. 18-1644.

The Examiner has acknowledged that claims 1-4, 9-12 and 17-20 are directed to allowable subject matter. The Examiner has objected to applicants' claims 17-24 due to certain informalities noted. Applicants have amended claims 17, 21 and 23, as suggested by the Examiner, thereby obviating the Examiner's objection thereto and to their respective dependent claims 18-20, 22 and 24.

In the Office Action, claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Particularly, the Examiner noted insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said display means" in the claim. Claim 19 has been amended to more clearly recite the feature of the present invention. Particularly, claim 19 has been amended to clarify that the displaying step includes changing display contents for operation. Applicants' claim 19, as amended, therefore overcomes the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 and is therefore submitted as patentable.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 7-8, 15-16 and 23-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ono (U.S. Patent No. 6,133,941). The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 5-6, 13-14 and 21-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Ono in view of Ito (U.S. Patent No. 5,745,161). With respect to applicants' claims, as amended, the Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

With respect to the Examiner's rejection of claims 7-8, 15-16 and 23-24, applicants' independent claims 7, 15 and 23 have been amended to more clearly define the present invention. Independent claims 7, 15 and 23 are directed to a camera server and corresponding method and storage medium for storing a program, respectively, for controlling a camera on the basis of a control instruction received from a camera operation apparatus via a network. Applicants' claims 7, 15 and 23 have been amended to recite that the camera server of the present invention determines that the camera operation apparatus can control the camera, in response to a camera control right request received from the camera operation apparatus, and then transmits to the camera operation apparatus a camera control right obtaining notice. The claims have been further amended to clarify that the notice includes information associated with the kind of camera. Such feature is not taught or suggested by the cited Ono patent.

The Examiner argues:

"Ono discloses a camera server (camera control server 11, figure 1) for controlling a camera on the basis of a control instruction (camera control request, column 5, lines 35-40) received from a camera operation apparatus (camera control client 101, figure 1) via a network (network 12, figure 1), comprising determination means for determining whether the camera operation apparatus can control the camera when a camera control right request is received from said camera operation apparatus... ; output means for outputting a camera control right obtaining notice to the camera operation apparatus and information associated with the kind of camera together with the notice when said determination means determined that the camera operation apparatus can control the camera (figures 1, 5A-5C, column 6, lines 1-37, camera control server 11 issues to each client camera attitude message and a control authority message which indicates 'control authority is possessed (can control the camera)')."

The Examiner has rejected corresponding independent claims 15 and 23 on essentially the same grounds.

Ono teaches in Fig. 1 a camera control system in which a camera server controls a camera in accordance with an instruction received from a client through a network. In this connection, Ono teaches in Figs. 5A-5C three messages which are transmitted from the camera server to the client. The three messages, i.e. video data message, camera attitude message and control authority message, have different message IDs, respectively, and are separate messages. According to Ono, the video data message includes attribute information about the video data; the camera attitude message includes information about pan angle, tilt angle and zoom ration; and the control authority message has control status and effective time data of a client with respect to the camera. As shown in Figs. 6A and 6B of Ono, these messages are sent at separate times to the client.

Ono thus does not teach or suggest a camera server including an output device for outputting to a camera operation apparatus a camera control right obtaining notice, which includes information associated with the kind of camera when it is determined that the client (camera operation apparatus) can control the camera. Instead, Ono transmits separate video data, camera attitude and control authority messages and the control authority message does not include information associated with the kind of camera.

The Ono patent therefore fails to teach the control apparatus, method or medium according to claims 7, 15 and 23 of the present invention. Applicants' claims 7, 15 and 23 and their respective dependent claims 8, 16 and 24 thus patentably distinguish over Ono.

With respect to the Examiner's rejection of claims 5-6, 13-14 and 21-22, applicants' independent claims 5, 13 and 21 have also been amended to more clearly define the present

invention. More particularly, independent claims 5, 13 and 21 are directed to a camera operation apparatus and corresponding method and storage medium for storing a program, respectively, for operating a camera via a network, including storing at least one module for generating a control command for the camera in accordance with each kind of camera, recognizing information associated with a kind of camera subject to control, selecting a module for generating the control command from the at least one module on the basis of information associated with the kind of camera recognized, and displaying a window for operating the camera on the basis of the module selected. Applicants' claims 5, 13 and 21 have been amended to additionally recite that the module for generating the control command for the camera is automatically selected on the basis of information associated with the kind of camera recognized. The claims have been further amended to clarify that the contents of the displayed window for operating the camera are changed according to the functions the camera can perform. According to these features of the present invention, a user can perform camera control operation without setting control parameters, which can be a troublesome step. Such features are neither taught nor suggested by the Ono and Ito patents cited by the Examiner.

With reference to claim 5, the Examiner argues that the Ono patent teaches a camera operation apparatus comprising storage means ("external storage device 307 stores control program, figure 2, column 4, line 66-column 5, line 9"); recognition means ("the operator at each client can recognize the control authority relationship with the server (camera), column 13, lines 59-63"); selection means for selecting a module for generating the control command ("figure 10 discloses that the user can select scroll bar 203 for panning, or scroll bar 204 for tilting, or scroll bar 205 for zooming, column 10, lines 1-18"); and display means for displaying a window for operating the camera ("video display window 201, figure 10, column 10, lines 1-

18"). The Examiner has rejected corresponding independent claims 13 and 21 on essentially the same grounds.

Ono teaches that a camera control client 101 effects camera control so that a display control unit 13b and an operation input unit 13c cause a CPU 102 to execute a control program stored in a ROM 103 or a control program loaded into a RAM 104. In addition, Ono teaches using a display screen as shown in Fig. 10 to operate a camera. However, the Examiner refers to scroll bars 203-205, which are selected by a user, as teaching the selection device and step of present invention. Such does not teach or suggest that a module is automatically selected for generating the control command for the camera, as claimed in amended claims 5, 13 and 21.

In addition, as noted by the Examiner, Ono fails to teach that the contents of the display screen are changed in accordance with the kind of camera. The Examiner argues:

"However, Ito discloses a video conference system, in which the color of the frame of the selected window is changed (figure 5, column 5, lines 30-60). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device on Ono by the teaching of Ito in order to let the operator who remotely control plurality of cameras can recognize which camera is controlled."

The cited Ito patent shows in Fig. 5 changing the display state of a displayed window 13A-13D when it is selected by a pointing device. For example, the selected window is flashed, or the color of the window is changed. However, Ito does not teach or suggest changing the display state of the selected window in accordance with a kind of functions the camera can perform. Ito further fails to teach or suggest that when a different window is selected, the display contents of a control panel 15 is changed in response to that selection. Even if a user selects any one of the windows 13A-13D, the control panel 15 is not changed. The reference thus fails to teach or suggest the selection device and a display device

functioning, as recited in applicants' amended claims 5, 13 and 21. Applicants' claims 5, 13 and 21 thus patentably distinguish over the cited Ono and Ito patents, taken either alone or in alleged combination.

In view of the above, it is submitted that claims 5-8, 13-16 and 21-24 patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of these claims is respectfully requested.

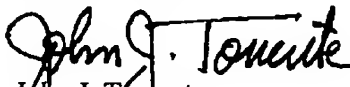
Applicants' newly added claims 25-33 are directed to a camera server, method and storage medium corresponding to the apparatus, method and storage medium of the allowed claims and include the feature of "a module request device" as described in applicants' specification and shown in Fig. 11. Added claims 25-33 are respectfully submitted as patentable.

If the Examiner believes that an interview would expedite consideration of this Amendment or of the application, a request is made that the Examiner telephone applicants' counsel at (212) 682-9640.

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Respectfully submitted,

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